

2005 Newsletter

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- **OSH Statistics**

- Number of industrial accidents decreases in 4 years

According to the announcement made on the 16th of the month by the Ministry of Labor regarding the industrial accidents that occurred in 2004, the number of industrial accidents and fatalities decreased by 6,050 persons or 6.4% and by 98 persons or 3.4% respectively compared with 2003.

The industrial accident rate and the fatalities per 10,000 people were 0.85% and 2.70 or decreases by 5.6% and 2.2% respectively compared with that of the year earlier (0.90%) and (2.76). This indicates that the number of industrial accidents that has continuously increased over the past few years has shown a decline trend for the first time in 4 years.

The number of occupational victims was 79,691 or a decrease by 6,103 persons (7.11%) compared with 2003. On the other hand, the number of patients suffering from such traditional occupational diseases as pneumoconiosis or deafness has significantly increased (623 persons and 47.2%) because pneumoconiosis was newly classified into 13 grades in July 2003. As a result, the overall number of occupational victims has increased by 587 (30.8%) over that of 2003.

In the meantime, the number of patients suffering from occupational diseases such as the musculoskeletal disease that has shown an increase trend recently was 6,691, a decrease by 534 persons (7.4%) compared with 2003. Most industries showed a decline in the number of accidents compared with 2003 except mining where the number of victims has increased by 546 (35.8%) due to increased cases of pneumoconiosis. Considered the size of workplaces, 68.0% (60,423 persons) of all accidents occurred at workplaces employing less than 50 workers, and except for workplaces employing more than 1,000 workers, all workplaces showed a decline in the number of accidents. The 5 major conventional types of accidents including falls, contractions (being stuck or caught) and overturning (collapses) accounted for 76.5% (60,944 persons) of the total industrial accidents.

Meanwhile, occupational victims with less than 1 year of job experience accounted for 56.9% (50,592 persons) of all victims.

(Ministry of Labor Policy News, February 18, 2005)

- **Main OSH Policy**

- Ministry of Labor discloses Blue Print for the occupational safety and health policy

- The 2nd 5-year industrial accident prevention plan established –

The government has announced its blue prints for the safety and health policy to be implemented during the forthcoming 5 years to build a safety industrial society achieved by the prevention of industrial accidents.

The Ministry of Labor disclosed on 29th that it had established ‘the 2nd 5-year industrial accident prevention plan’, the medium-long-term industrial accident prevention policy, to be pushed for 5 years until 2009 starting next year after collecting opinions from related persons and through discussions with related ministries.

Since there are rapid changes in the field of industrial safety and health internally and externally, the Ministry of Labor has drawn up the 5-year plan to build a foundation capable of pushing a systematic policy for the prevention of industrial accidents.

The Ministry of Labor has established 15 political projects in 5 major fields and 113 detailed implementation strategies with the aim to create safe and clean workplaces and to maintain healthy workforce. The Ministry intends to effectively manage the industry vulnerable to frequent accidents involving death and strengthen the ability to prevent large accidents. It will concentrate on making up the problems in the field of safety and health by improving safety levels at small workplaces. It plans to establish a foundation for workplaces to voluntarily prevent industrial accidents by creating industrial accident prevention program participated in jointly by the labor and the management and by developing the quality of civilian experts and safety and health service agencies.

In order to promote the health of workers, the Ministry plans to strengthen its ability to prevent occupational diseases and induce utmost efforts to create comfortable working environment. In addition, it will make a climate of observing laws between the labor and the management, strengthen safety and health training and the responsibility of workplaces so that efficient inspection or supervision can be carried out.

(Daily Safety News, December 30, 2004)

- Government announces the first 5-year National Safety Management Plan

- 62 trillion 500 billion won to be invested for reducing accident rate closer to the level of advanced countries –

The government disclosed its policy to invest 62 trillion 500 billion won during 5 years from 2005 go 2009 to prevent 17 types of accidents including industrial ones and eliminate unsafe factors.



The National Emergency Management Agency disclosed on 14th that it has established a target to bring the property damage resulting from accidents to the level of developed countries within 10 years and announced the 1st 5-year National Safety Management Plan, the medium-long-term national management policy, to be executed for the first time in the government history. This plan supported by the basic plans established by 22 central government ministries under the Prime Minister's accident management policy was finalized via examination by the Central Safety Management Committee.

In order to effectively support the 1st 5-year National Safety Management Plan, the government has earmarked a total of 62 trillion and 500 billion won. It plans to solve problems by preventing natural disasters such as the storm and flood, and heavy snow, and by strengthening fire safety management for the artificial accidents such as large fires or radioactive accidents, and operating a field radioactivity prevention command.

Furthermore, the government plans to protect the national infrastructures by quickly dispatching replaceable personnel in case workers collectively refuse to work in transportation, financial, medical and other industries and strengthen quarantine to prevent the inflow of infectious diseases such as the mad cow disease. At the same time, the government will dispatch 119 international rescue party to the overseas areas of disasters promoting the national status, support disaster aid materials to North Korea and push joint flood prevention activities in the Imjin river areas.

In order to strengthen government-level ability to prevent and counter disasters and build a forward disaster management system, we plan to validate and improve the effectiveness of the

National Safety Management Plan by holding a general disaster control drill in April of each year where the central government, local government and the whole people participate, said Kwon Wook, Administrator of the National Emergency Management Agency.

(Daily Safety News, December 2004)

- **Update in KOREA**

- Occupational safety and health control to be restored.

- Government reexamines occupational safety and health control –

The government plans to jointly study the effectiveness of control over occupational safety and health with related ministries under a program of restoring its relaxed control over occupational safety and health back to the original status. Since the control over occupational safety and health was relaxed in 1997 pursuant to Special Measure Act on Relaxing Corporate Activities, ripple effects expanded including an increase in the number of accidents. Therefore, the government agreed with related ministries to study and review ways of restoring control on occupational safety and health.

According to the agreement, the Ministry of Labor and the Ministry of Commerce, Industry and Energy including other related ministries will reexamine the safety and health regulation that had been relaxed based on Special Measure Acts from a zero base to seek a rationalization program, including the revival of regular inspections conducted on press.

From 1997, the Korean government has established a special measure act to boldly relax regulations that adversely affect corporate competitiveness. However, safety industries and academic world contended that it is unavoidable to regulate safety and health until the social atmosphere related to safety becomes mature because the safety and health control is a social regulation that should be supplemented and strengthened continuously to protect the life of workers itself.

Especially when the system of requiring and examining hazard prevention programs, which used to be the basis of acquiring safety at workplaces handling toxic materials and hazardous equipment according to changes in technique and facilities at industrial sites, was abolished, safety levels at manufacturing sites have deteriorated significantly.

In the meantime, the Ministry of Labor disclosed that it will seek joint research programs with related ministries this year to rationalize the occupational safety and health control and to revive the relaxed regulation. They plan to restore control sometime during the latter half of the year.

(Daily Safety News, January 10, 2005)

- Function of occupational safety and health policy committee to be strengthened.

- A special committee composed of approximately 20 experts to be organized. –

The function of the occupational safety and health policy committee operating under the control of the Ministry of Labor to establish basic plans for occupational safety and health business and examine and adjust major policies related to the central administrative agencies will be strengthened starting this year.

According to the announcement made by the Ministry of Labor recently, the Enforcement Decree of the occupational safety and health act will be amended this year. Under the amendment, the working committee which used to discuss and adjust in advance the items to be deliberated by the policy examination committee will be abolished and a special committee composed of approximately 20 experts will be operated.

The newly established special committee will be composed of approximately 20 experts in each field and other related central government officials including the chairperson.

Since the chairperson of the examination committee was changed to the vice-minister of labor from the minister of Labor in 2003 to revitalize the operation of the occupational safety and health policy deliberation committee, the standing committee was changed to a special committee this time. This is to ensure more effective operation of overall occupational safety and health policies and to collect opinions of experts centered on actual business regarding the 2nd 5-year Occupational safety and health Plan which starts this year.

The special committee will, if necessary, invite experts in related fields and listen to their opinions to more effectively examine major occupational safety and health topics.

(Daily Safety News, January 13, 2005)

- ‘Consumer Safety Index’ to be introduced to check safety levels in daily life

- Ministry of Finance and Economy expects this to offer an opportunity for the development of consumer-centered safety policy –

The Ministry of Finance and Economy disclosed on 13th that it will develop ‘Consumer Safety Index’ as part of a consumer’s safety promotion program continuously implemented since 2003. So far, there has been collected no data relating to the safety levels felt by consumers in their daily life, consumers’ safety consciousness, examples of accidents and the variation trends.

The Ministry will select consumers’ actual feeling of safety, safety awareness, degree and frequency of damage, and the consumers’ safe behavior and attention as the major evaluation items of consumer safety index. It will analyze safety by consumer products and classes to derive overall consumer safety index, and will select and survey sample groups every year based on the statistical information on danger provided by the Consumer Safety Center. Based on the results, the Ministry will check and manage the variation trends of safety index.

The introduction of the consumer safety index is expected to offer an opportunity to analyze the element and the degree of danger actually felt by consumers, continuously check the variation trends, check changes in the market environment and the consumers' consciousness and to develop consumer-centered safety policies.

The Ministry of Finance and Economy disclosed that it will present the plan to the 8th Consumer Safety Committee on January 18 and implement the plan after undergoing deliberation by the Consumer Policy Examination Committee.

(Daily Safety News, January 15, 2005)

- Ministry of Labor conducts special inspections and epidemiologic investigations on workplaces handling normal hexane



Recently, 8 foreigners working at an LCD and DVD parts manufacturing plant have been diagnosed as Multiple neuropathy caused by normal hexane. In connection with this, the Ministry of Labor will conduct epidemiologic investigations and special inspections at this plant.

The Ministry of Labor disclosed that it will, jointly with the prosecution, specially inspect 367 workplaces handling normal hexane starting on the 17th, and conduct occupational epidemiologic investigations on Dong Hwa Digital. Ltd in question.

A special inspection team composed of work supervisors, occupational safety specialists and the prosecution will check the responsibility of each workplace to monitor the working environment, conduct special medical examination, prepare materials safety data sheets(MSDS), install local exhaust systems and issue personal protective equipments. If any violation is discovered, the team will take immediate punitive actions, and will also check to determine if any workplace attempted to hide or reduce the occurrence of the multiple neuropathy resulting from normal hexane.

In order to prevent the recurrence of the typical incidents, the team plans to conduct comprehensive epidemiologic tests to determine clear causes of said occupational diseases, degree of exposure to the normal hexane and the effects of chemical materials.

In addition, the team intends to provide technical support to the workplaces handling normal hexane to more effectively prevent occupational diseases. It will provide training stuffs in various languages including Thai so that foreign workers can easily understand the stuffs, and have workers practice safe working methods and receive related training prior to starting work.

(Daily Safety News, January 18, 2005)

- Dust forecast / warning system to be introduced for the first time in the nation

- Seoul city will begin micro-dust concentration forecasts in February –

The Seoul city government disclosed on 12th that it will start a dust forecast and warning system for the first time in Korea. Under the system, a warning will be issued when the dust concentration exceeds a specified level.

According to city officials, the level of micro-dust in downtown is approximately 2 or 3 times that of Tokyo, Paris, London and other advanced countries.

This system plans to forecast micro-dust concentration of the following day and announce real-time concentration through Internet (dust.seoul.go.kr) so that the people can use such information as reference in planning their sports and outing.



The forecast will be classified into 6 phases: Good, fair, bad to sensitive persons, slightly bad, bad, and extremely bad. The city government will recommend kindergartens and primary schools to avoid outdoor classes in case the forecast is Slightly Bad, or consider closing schools in case the forecast is Bad or Extremely Bad.

The interest of the citizens with respect to the health hazards caused by the micro-dust has risen lately, and the city government has established this forecast and warning system to protect the health of citizens by forecasting the dust concentration of the following day and to reduce the degree of air pollution, said a related official from Seoul City government.

The domestic Air Environment Protection Act prescribes the issuance of a warning only for ozone among atmospheric pollutants, and the Weather Service Act, the issuance of a special warning when Yellow Sand occurs.

(Daily Safety News, January 13, 2005)

- Taebaek city to construct a virtual safety theme park with a schedule to open in 2010 after starting construction in October this year

A virtual safety simulation theme park including a virtual safety training school and self-control training facilities will be constructed in Taebaek city, Gangwon Province.

The Taebaek city disclosed on 7th that it will start the construction of the citizens' virtual safety theme park in October this year.



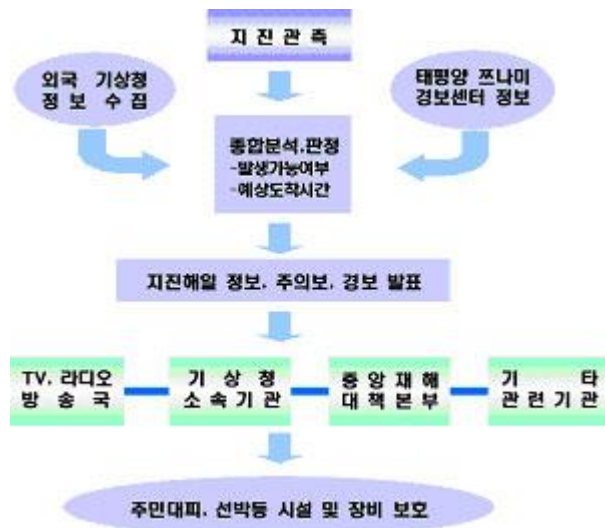
This theme park housing virtual safety training facilities, entertainment and lodging facilities will be opened in 2010.

The virtual safety training center will include 15 different kinds of facilities including the virtual safety school, virtual safety simulation hall and self-control training facilities, while the entertaining facilities will include 11 types including the ride through the underground tunnels. The center will also house other convenience facilities such as resort hotels, youth hotels and camping grounds. The area will be constructed into a composite resort area boasting safety training facilities, game and lodging functions.

Taebaek city officials expect that, once this theme park is completed, approximately 4,000 new jobs will be created and the financial effects of 392.5 billion won will be occurred.

The construction of this virtual safety theme park is a project planned since last year. Due to the earthquake and the storm waves that have struck Southeast Asia recently, this will be a world safety training center drawing keen attention from the people, said an official from Taebaek city. (Daily Safety News, February 11, 2005)

- Opening hot-line between Japan and Korea regarding earthquakes and tsunami
- Meteorological Administration discusses information exchange on a real-time basis



Opening of a hot line between Japan and Korea to exchange information on a real-time basis in preparation for future earthquakes and tsunami is expected.

The Meteorological Administration stated on 12th that it will discuss with the Japan's Meteorological Administration sometime this month to open Korea-Japan hotline so that the information on earthquakes and tsunami occurring in Japan can be received on a real-time basis.

According to the announcement made by the Meteorological Administration, such plan was decided when the earthquake advisory members, scientists related to earthquakes and tsunami and professionals from related agencies held an expert council to strengthen the earthquakes and tsunami.

Once this hotline is opened between the Korean and Japanese Meteorological Administrations, information on earthquakes and tsunami occurring in Japan, which used to be received only approximately 5 minutes after the occurrence, can be received on a real-time basis through the Global Telecommunication System (GTS).

The Meteorological Administration plans to replace the aged tsunami and wave meter operating at Ulneung do Island and install an ocean bottom seismogram in the central area of the East Sea sometime next year, and install an earthquakes and tsunami monitoring center and a tsunami and wave meter in Dokdo and an ocean bottom seismogram in the southern area of the East Sea in 2007.

(Daily Safety News, January 14, 2005)

- **Update in KOSHA**

- Ministry of Labor to operate a working environment monitoring reform committee
 - The committee will be organized under the control of the Korea Occupational Safety & Health Agency. System reform program to be established by July this year –

Since the working environment monitoring carried out to check the condition of employees working under poor working environment has not been effective due to owners' attempt to reduce the workload or to hide employees working under poor conditions, the Ministry of Labor began to find ways of remedying such condition.

In connection with the recent case where foreign workers involving in cleaning job at the LCD. DVD parts manufacturing plant located in Hwaseong, Gyeonggi Province were collectively poisoned by the normal hexane, the Ministry of Labor has discovered there was a problem in the working environment. The Ministry therefore decided to organize a working environment monitoring reform committee to effectively establish a innovative monitoring system by fundamentally prohibiting inadequate monitoring.

The Ministry of Labor will organize the reform committee under the control of the Korea Occupational Safety & Health Agency. The committee will be staffed by approximately 15 experts recommended by the industrial hygienists and medical specialists, and the labor and the management.

The committee will analyze overall legal systems and operations of the current systems and related problems in various aspects, and establish a rational operating system that suits the reality of Korea by studying and benchmarking the systems of foreign countries.

In order to effectively prevent occupational diseases, the committee believes it necessary to closely link occupational diseases not only with the working environment monitoring but also with the special medical examination. It will promote the efficiency of the industrial health service by being directly involved in the examination of related fields.

(Daily Safety News, February 21, 2005)

- Safety and health management manuals by industry developed
 - Korea Occupational Safety & Health Agency plans to develop 120 manuals –
Safety and health manuals subdivided into the type of industry will be developed and distributed.
According to Korea Occupational Safety & Health Agency, it will develop safety and health manuals by types of industries to effectively manage safety and health by analyzing the examples of accidents and potential hazards that might occur at workplaces.

Korea Occupational Safety & Health Agency plans to develop a total of 120 manuals for subdivided industry starting with 19 themes assigned to regional head offices and area offices this year.

The safety and health management manual will contain detailed production processes, analysis of hazards by equipment or by detailed process, safety rules and working standards, safety inspection checklists, requirements of the laws and regulations related to safety and health and other

applicable standards.

Korea Occupational Safety & Health Agency plans to present awards to the regional head offices and the area offices demonstrating superior performance in developing materials. It will provide manuals first to small workplaces through the material development team.

(Daily Safety News, February 21, 2005)

- Agreement signed with Seoul National University to exchange technical information and to cooperate researches



Kim Yong Dal, President of Korea Occupational Safety & Health Agency (KOSHA), signed an academic and industrial cooperative agreement with Han Min Ku, President of the College of Engineering, Seoul National University at 11 a.m., February 2 at KOSHA conference room to more effectively and quickly cope with the rapidly changing safety and health environment. Under this agreement, both parties will exchange technical information on safety and health, jointly perform researches and operate industrial expert courses.

(KOSHA press release, February 2, 2005)

- **New OSH Materials**

- Compensation procedure web site developed
 - Korea Labor Welfare Corporation says it will help improve industrial accident business –



A compensation procedure web site has been developed to more effectively perform business related to industrial accident compensation.

The Korea Labor Welfare Corporation (President: Bang Yong Sok) recently disclosed that it has developed a compensation procedure web site from which all information on business can easily be found for each field through an innovative method using Internet. Since the existing laws related to industrial accident insurance are complicated and diversified, they had to be divided and published into many books. The construction of the web site will improve such problems, and will allow easy access to the regulations and the guidelines issued by the Korea Labor Welfare Corporation, inquiries and answers, judicial precedents and information on business procedures.

With the introduction of this web site, the cost of hundreds of million won required to publish or revise books can be saved every year. The web site is expected to promote business efficiency because it can look for information from one place, or quickly add, correct or delete information without any additional cost.

At the same time, it will enhance the fairness of business and the trust of the people by pursuing the standardization and generalization of the industrial accident business.

(Daily Safety News, February 11, 2005)

- The Occupational Safety & Health Research Institute (OSHRI) publishes a collection of research paper covering 15 years.

- Research results by theme and by year presented to persons related to safety. –

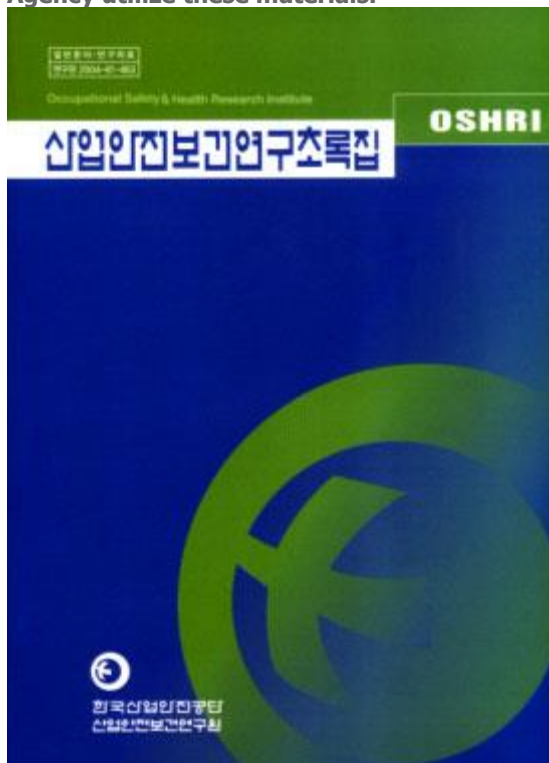
The Occupational Safety & Health Research Institute has published a collection of research paper covering researches carried out for the past 15 years regarding industrial safety and health.

According to a related official, the Occupational Safety & Health Research Institute of Korea

Occupational Safety & Health Agency has published a collection of researches carried out into industrial safety and health in commemoration of its 15th anniversary of opening, and has distributed the books to the National Assembly, Ministry of Labor and other institutions related to safety.

The collection published this time contains the results of various research projects pursued up to this date since the Occupational Safety & Health Research Institute was established in July 1989. In order to help users better understand, the books were chronologically compiled and divided into 5 themes: safe research encompassing machine, electricity, chemical engineering and construction; research into industrial safety and health; research into occupational diseases and epidemiologic investigations; research into industrial chemical materials, and research into the safety and health policies.

We have published this book with a hope that the results of research into safety, the fruit of efforts made by researchers, will be widely known to and be of help to many safety and health specialists, said Kim Yong Kuk, head of the Safety Management Policy Research Center. We expect that the book will provide upgraded technical services to the industrial sites if the related officials at the regional head offices or area offices and the head office of the Korea Occupational Safety & Health Agency utilize these materials.



This collection of result paper can also be searched through the Home Page of the Occupational Safety & Health Research Institute of Korea Occupational Safety & Health Agency.

(Daily Safety News, January 11, 2005)